

**CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF NUTRITION  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PERSONNEL**

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NATIONAL FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

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## CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF NUTRITION EDUCATION AND TRAINING PERSONNEL

### PREFACE

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This research was conceived as part of *The Strategic Plan for Nutrition Education*, and it became a reality through partnerships with Nutrition Education and Training Program personnel and others involved in nutrition education in Child Nutrition Programs. It is our hope that information from this research will be used in planning continuing professional education for nutrition educators.

This research was begun by **Dr. Jeannie Sneed** and completed by **Dr. Martha Conklin**. We are grateful to both for their expertise in conducting the research and working with the NET Advisory Committee. **Dr. Mary Frances Nettles** and **Ms. Deborah Carr** reviewed the final report and provided constructive advice. **Ms. Lisa Barrett** prepared the manuscript. We appreciate all the contributions of an efficient and dedicated staff.

Roy S. Maize, III, PhD, RD  
Director of Applied Research

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## **CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF NUTRITION EDUCATION AND TRAINING PERSONNEL**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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#### **Overview**

The United States Department of Agriculture authorized a strategic planning process in 1992 to strengthen the Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program. Research scientists at the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) initiated a study in 1994 to help achieve the goal of defining roles and responsibilities of nutrition education personnel.

Continuing professional education is a prime vehicle for assuring that nutrition education personnel at all levels of employment perform consistently with national guidelines. The purposes of this study were to determine continuing education needs of NET personnel employed at the national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district levels as perceived by professionals working in these positions, and to determine how ratings of continuing education needs differ based on level of employment.

A mail questionnaire was sent to 194 national, regional, state, and school district professionals involved in the NET Program. The questionnaire consisted of a list of areas/topics for which continuing education might be needed by NET personnel. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of need for continuing education using a four-point scale: no need (0), low need (1), moderate need (2), and high need (3).

One hundred and seventeen individuals (60%) returned the survey. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were employed in nutrition education activities at the state level, 35 percent in school districts, 4 percent at the regional USDA level, and 2 percent in national USDA offices. All USDA regions were represented by the respondents with the largest percentage (35%) working in the West. The majority (90%) were employed full-time and devoted 53% of their time strictly to nutrition and food service education responsibilities. Respondents had been employed in a job with nutrition and food service education responsibilities an average of 14 years.

#### **Major Study Findings**

The area for continuing education rated the highest by all respondents was program evaluation. Delivery of educational programs/instructional activities and needs assessment areas also were ranked

among the highest areas of need for continuing education. The use of new technology for education (i.e., CD-ROM, interactive video) was the specific continuing education topic with the highest mean rating.

State NET personnel rated program evaluation and community outreach/marketing as the areas with the highest need for continuing education. District-level nutrition education professionals gave the highest mean ratings to needs assessment, delivery of educational programs/instructional activities, and community outreach/marketing content areas. The mean rating of district personnel with regards to the need for continuing education in the delivery of educational programs/instructional activities was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than the mean rating given by state NET personnel.

## CONCLUSIONS

The need for continuing education as perceived by nutrition education personnel employed at the national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district levels was determined. Most of the ten content areas received overall mean ratings indicating a moderate need for continuing education. Administrators can use this information in planning continuing professional education for nutrition education personnel.



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## CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS OF NUTRITION EDUCATION AND TRAINING PERSONNEL

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The Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program was started in 1977 with the passage of PL 95-177. The purpose of NET Program funding was to encourage states to provide nutrition education to children, train food service workers, and collaborate with teachers to incorporate nutrition into the curriculum.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture initiated a strategic planning process in 1992 in response to recommendations from a report entitled *Nutrition Needs of Children*. One of the goals developed by *The Strategic Plan for Nutrition Education* stated that the proportion of nutrition education personnel in Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) at all levels of employment with roles and responsibilities that are consistent with national guidelines should be increased to at least 75 percent by the year 2000. The strategy for achieving that goal was to collaborate with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) and other agencies in developing national guidelines on roles and responsibilities of nutrition education personnel in CNPs (Mandell, 1993).

Continuing professional education is a prime vehicle for assuring that nutrition education personnel at the national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district levels of employment perform consistently with national guidelines. One of the ways to determine the continuing education needs of NET personnel is to ask them, because professionals make judgments on a consistent basis about their need for updated knowledge and skills to enhance effectiveness. The purposes of this study were to:

- ◆ Determine continuing education needs of nutrition education personnel employed at the national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district levels as perceived by professionals working in these positions.
- ◆ Determine how ratings of continuing education needs differ based on level of employment.

### METHOD

#### Advisory Committee

An advisory committee was formed to assist in the development of the project. This committee helped formulate plans for a study on roles and responsibilities of NET personnel (Conklin, 1995) as well as this study on continuing education needs of NET professionals. The advisory committee was composed of nutrition education professionals from each level of the NET program including national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district (Appendix A). The advisory committee



membership included one representative from the national NET staff, one representative from a regional office that is responsible for NET programs, two state NET coordinators representing various sizes of states and funding levels, three district NET specialists representing various geographic regions, one representative of the Society for Nutrition Education (SNE), and the president of the National Association of State NET Coordinators (NASNET). The role of the advisory committee relating to this research was to review the objectives of the entire project and to identify the topical areas for which NET personnel may have continuing education needs. This list of topics, organized by content area, was used as the basis for the study questionnaire.

### **Questionnaire**

A mail questionnaire was developed to collect empirical data about the continuing education needs of NET personnel. The questionnaire consisted of two parts (Appendix B). Part I consisted of a list of content areas/topics for which continuing education might be needed by NET personnel. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of need for continuing education using a four-point rating scale: no need (0), low need (1), moderate need (2), and high need (3). Part II of the questionnaire contained respondent and program characteristics. Included in these questions were state in which respondent lived, level of employment, position title, highest level of education, and certification.

The research proposal was reviewed and approved by the Education Information Advisory Committee (EIAC) from the Council of Chief State School Officers, and an individual from EIAC approved the final draft of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was approved by members of the NET advisory committee, and the final questionnaire and corresponding cover letter were approved by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee at The University of Southern Mississippi.

### **Study Population**

The study population consisted of four individuals employed at the USDA Nutrition and Technical Services Division with NET responsibilities, individuals at the seven regional USDA offices who had responsibility for the NET program, all state directors of CNPs and NET Coordinators, and all district NET specialists identified by state NET coordinators or major city directors of CNPs.

### **Data Collection**

The questionnaire was mailed to 194 national, regional, state, and school district professionals involved in nutrition education during the summer of 1994. A reminder postcard was sent three weeks after the initial mailing, and two weeks after that an additional cover letter and questionnaire were mailed to all nonrespondents.



### Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations were calculated for ratings of continuing education need using the SPSSx computerized statistical package. Additional analysis was conducted to determine if continuing education needs differed by level of employment.

## RESULTS

### Rate of Return

A total of 117 usable surveys (60%) were returned (Table 1). This was considered a good rate of return given the length and complexity of the questionnaire and the time frame in which the study was conducted.

Table 1. Rate of Return of Study Questionnaires

Level of Employment	No. Mailed	No. Returned	%
National USDA	4	2	50
Regional USDA	7	4	57
State	100	66	66
Regional	5	1	20
District	78	40	51
Category Missing		4	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>60</b>



## Respondent Characteristics

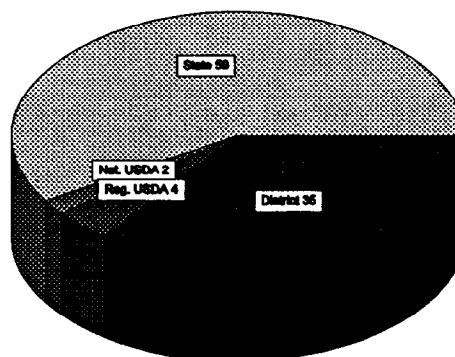
Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were employed in nutrition education activities at the state level, 35 percent in school districts, 4 percent at the regional USDA level, and 2 percent in national USDA offices (Figure 1). The size of the school districts employing nutrition education personnel ranged from 1200 to 310,000 students. The median enrollment was 28,000.

All USDA regions were represented by the respondents. The largest percentage (35%) worked in the Western region with the Southeast (19%) and Mountain Plains (16%) regions well represented (Figure 2). Ten percent of the respondents were from the Southwest region, and 8 percent each were from the Mid-Atlantic and Mid-West. Five percent were from the Northeast region.

The majority (90%) of respondents were employed full-time. Eleven part-time professionals (10%) worked an average of 21 hours per week. Sixty-six percent of the respondents supervised employees and devoted a mean of  $53\% \pm 37\%$  of their time strictly to nutrition and food service education responsibilities. The total number of years of work experience ranged from 2 to 50 years with a mean of  $21 \pm 9$  years. Respondents had been employed in a job with nutrition and food service education responsibilities from 1 to 37 years with a mean of  $14 \pm 8$  years.

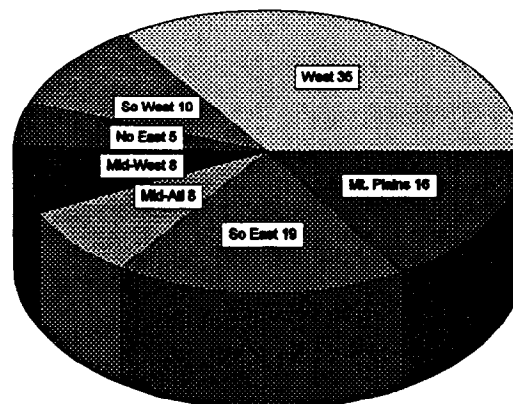
### Level of Employment

Figure 1



### USDA Regions

Figure 2



The highest level of education for the majority of respondents (61%) was a Master's degree. Seventeen percent had completed some graduate work, 14 percent a baccalaureate degree, 4 percent a doctorate, and 4 percent characterized their educational level as other (Figure 3).

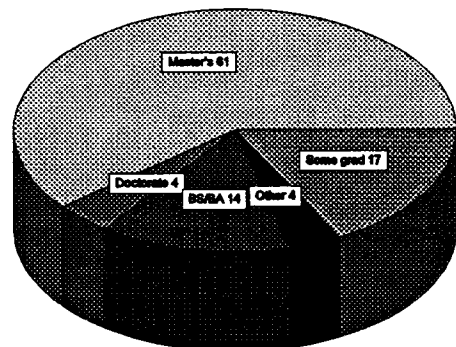
The primary educational major was food, nutrition, dietetics, and food service management (61%), although 12 percent were educated in health education and community health and another 12 percent in business and public administration (Figure 4). Nine percent held degrees in education or educational administration, and another 6 percent were educated in other areas such as law. Fifty-five percent of the respondents were registered dietitians, 31 percent were certified by the American School Food Service Association, and 18 percent held a teaching certificate.

### Reliability of Questionnaire

The *a priori* areas of continuing education need as established by the NET advisory committee were analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach's *alpha* coefficient. The *alpha* coefficients for these areas or scales are listed in Table 2. The reliability of the scales was very good. No *alpha* coefficient was less than .75 and most were .85 or higher.

#### Education

Figure 3



#### Area of Education

Figure 4

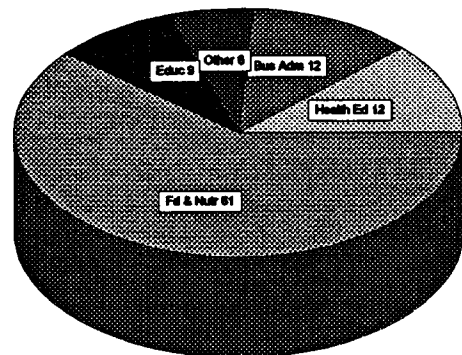


Table 2. Reliability of continuing education need content areas.<sup>a</sup>

Area of Continuing Education Need	<i>Alpha</i> coefficient
Needs Assessment	.888
Program Planning	.890
Curricula/Program Development	.875
Delivery of Educational Programs/Instructional Activities	.798
Development of Partnerships/Strategic Alliances	.852
Community Outreach/Marketing	.897
Program Evaluation	.935
Fiscal Management	.911
Program Management	.864
Other	.942

<sup>a</sup>N=117

### Continuing Education Needs

#### Content Areas

The area for continuing education rated the highest by all respondents was program evaluation which received a mean rating of 2.24 indicating a moderate need. The other areas for continuing education also received a rating establishing a lesser but still moderate need. Table 3 lists the mean ratings for each area in descending order. Delivery of educational programs/instructional activities and needs assessment received identical mean ratings of 2.02 and the need for continuing education in fiscal management received the lowest rating at 1.72.



Table 3. Ratings<sup>a</sup> for continuing education needs for personnel involved in nutrition education<sup>b</sup>.

Area of Continuing Education Need	Mean±SD
Program Evaluation	2.24±.80
Community Outreach/Marketing	2.20±.65
Curricula/Program Development	2.08±.64
Other	2.07±.54
Needs Assessment	2.02±.75
Delivery of Educational Programs/Instructional Activities	2.02±.75
Program Management	1.99±.72
Development of Partnerships/Strategic Alliances	1.82±.75
Program Planning	1.77±.79
Fiscal Management	1.72±.92

<sup>a</sup>Scale: no need (0) to high need (3)<sup>b</sup>N=117

### Continuing Education Topics

The ratings for specific continuing education topics under each content area varied from the highest mean rating of 2.50 for the topic, use of new technology for education (i.e., CD-ROM, interactive video) to the lowest mean rating of 1.46 for the topic, working with food service directors. Table 4 lists in descending order nine topics that scored a mean of at least 2.25 indicating a rating of moderate-to-high need for continuing education.

Respondents were given the opportunity to list additional continuing education topics. Only four individuals listed additional items. Other suggested topics for continuing education were job analysis/work simplification, managing the media, team building, computer training, and leadership and supervision of professional staff.

Table 4. Topics for continuing education rated<sup>a</sup> as moderate-to-high need for nutrition education personnel<sup>b</sup>.

Topics for Continuing Education	Mean±SD
Use of new technology for education (i.e., CD-ROM, interactive video)	2.50±.69
New resources for nutrition education	2.46±.63
Developing marketing efforts related to nutrition education	2.32±.76
Using effective methods for behavior change	2.32±.77
Comprehensive school health	2.30±.71
Using social marketing techniques	2.30±.79
Developing marketing plans	2.27±.82
Conducting environmental scan to determine trends	2.27±.85
Conducting formative and summative evaluation	2.26±.85

<sup>a</sup>Scale: no need (0) to high need (3)

<sup>b</sup>N=117

### Continuing Education Needs Analyzed by Level of Employment

#### Content Areas

Analysis was conducted to determine if there were differences in continuing education needs based on the respondents' level of employment. Mean ratings for the areas/topics were split into two groups: ratings from respondents who identified themselves as working at the state level and individuals working in school districts. The number of respondents from the national and regional USDA levels was too small to use for this analysis (see Table 1).



Of the ten content areas for continuing education, state NET personnel rated program evaluation and community outreach/marketing areas the highest at 2.24 and 2.21, respectively (Table 5). This indicated a moderate need for continuing education in these areas. With school district-level personnel, the highest content areas were needs assessment, delivery of educational programs/instructional activities, and community outreach/marketing. All received a mean rating of 2.20 indicating moderate need. The lowest ratings for both state and district personnel were fiscal management (1.63 and 1.87, respectively) and program planning (1.71 and 1.93, respectively). Figure 5 plots the mean ratings for continuing education needs by content areas for state- and district-level nutrition education personnel.

A *t*-test was used to analyze whether any of the ratings of state and district personnel were significantly different from one another. The ratings of district personnel with regards to delivery of educational program/instructional activities were significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than state NET personnel (Table 5).

### **Continuing Education Topics**

Continuing education topics rated the highest by nutrition education personnel at the state level were use of new technology for education (i.e., CD-ROM, interactive video) with a mean score of 2.55 and new resources for nutrition education with a mean score of 2.44 (Table 6). Both scores indicated a rating of moderate-to-high need for continuing education. Topics rated the lowest by state-level NET personnel were working with food service directors (1.35) and ethics (1.39). These mean ratings represent perceptions of a low need for continuing education on these two topics.

NET professionals employed at the district level rated the same two topics the lowest for continuing education. Working with food service directors received a rating of 1.60 and ethics scored 1.63. Whereas school district personnel ranked these topics last, the overall scores represented a moderate need for continuing education as opposed to a low need as perceived by state NET personnel. District personnel also ranked the same topics the highest as state personnel. New resources for nutrition education and use of new technology for education were rated as a moderate need for continuing education with mean ratings of 2.47 and 2.40, respectively. The district personnel reversed the order of the two highest topics, and they rated the need for continuing education slightly lower than ratings of state NET personnel.

A *t*-test was used to compare the difference in mean scores for continuing education topics as rated by state and school district nutrition education personnel (Table 6). In all instances where significant differences existed, the school district personnel mean ratings for continuing education topics were higher than those of state NET personnel. A highly significant difference ( $p < .01$ ) was found with the topic, coordinating with teaching staff on nutrition education. District level personnel rated this topic at a mean score of 2.35 and state personnel gave it a mean score of 1.88. The higher rating could be explained by the district-level nutrition education personnel's direct involvement in schools with instructional staff. Significant differences ( $p < .05$ ), were found with the topics of involving





Table 5. Ratings<sup>a</sup> for continuing education needs for personnel involved in nutrition education by level of employment.

Areas of Continuing Education Need	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Program Evaluation	2.24+.81	2.14+.84
Community Outreach/Marketing	2.21+.64	2.20+.69
Needs Assessment	2.07+.73	2.02+.74
Other	2.06+.47	2.06+.69
Curricula/Program Development	2.00+.68	2.19+.58
Program Management	1.94+.77	2.01+.69
Delivery of Educational Programs/Instructional Activities	1.88+.79	2.20+.64*
Development of Partnerships/Strategic Alliances	1.73+.67	1.98+.87
Program Planning	1.71+.77	1.93+.84
Fiscal Management	1.63+.87	1.87+1.00

\*Significant at  $p < .05$ <sup>a</sup>Scale: no need (0) to high need (3)<sup>b</sup>N=66<sup>c</sup>N=40



# Figure 5

Areas of continuing education needs rated  
by state and district NET professionals

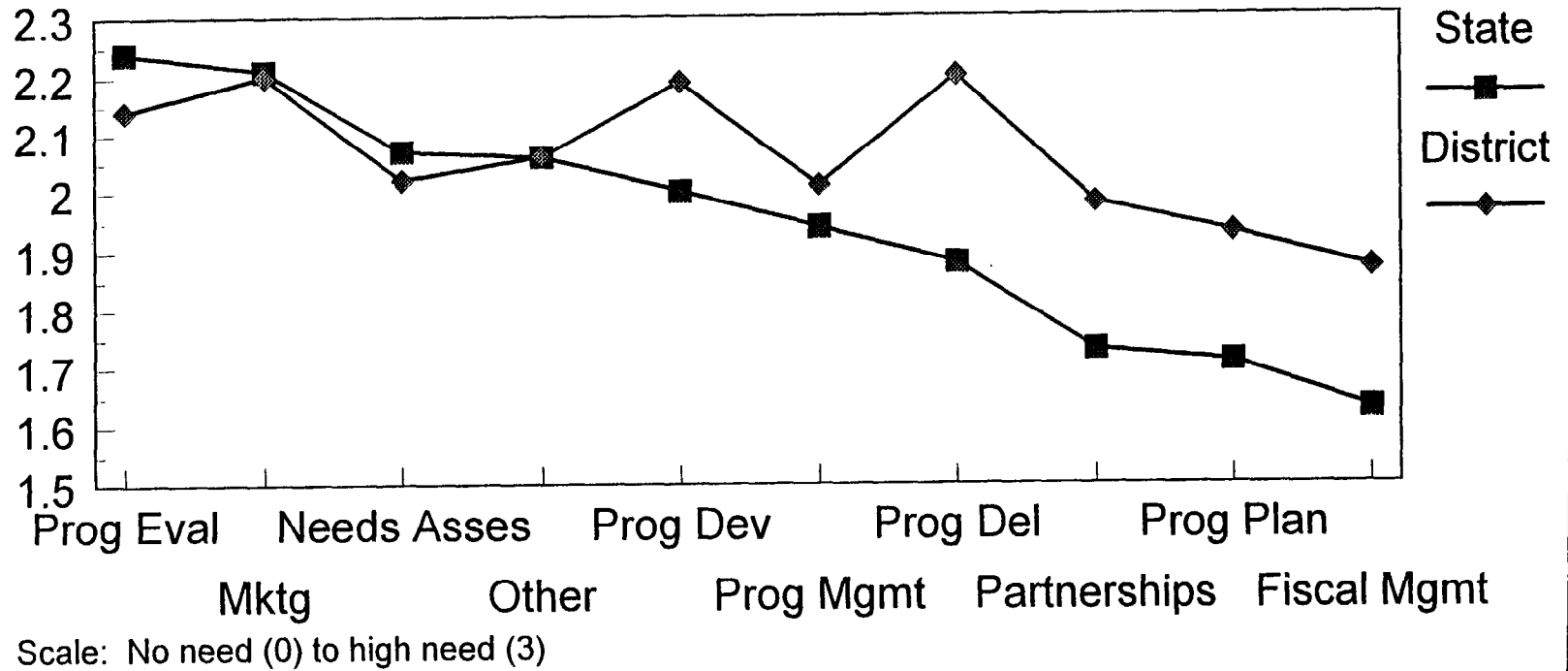


Table 6. Topics for continuing education rated<sup>a</sup> by personnel involved in nutrition education at the state and district levels.

Topics for Continuing Education	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Need Assessment Area		
Conducting focus groups	2.20+.75	2.05+.78
Analyzing and summarizing needs assessment data	2.09+.91	2.02+.86
Developing questionnaires for needs assessment	2.02+.89	2.07+.83
Collecting data for needs assessment	1.98+.87	1.95+.85
Program Planning Area		
Developing strategic plans	1.92+.85	2.08+.85
Developing annual plans	1.77+.87	1.95+.96
Developing goals, objectives, and learner outcomes	1.74+.98	1.77+1.09
Writing a philosophy statement	1.60+.83	1.92+1.00
Involving students in program planning	1.55+.93	1.95+.93*
Curricula/Program Development Area		
Using effective methods for behavior	2.26+.83	2.38+.71
Developing training programs based on adult learning techniques	2.09+.86	2.13+.91
Integrating nutrition into other curricula	2.08+.80	2.30+.82
Using standards for sequential curricula	2.02+.97	2.17+.84
Developing curricula based on age and developmental levels of students	1.97+.91	2.27+.91

Table 6 cont...



Table 6 cont.

Topics for Continuing Education	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Curricula/Program Development Area,cont.		
Developing curricula	1.89+.95	2.10+.84
Working with curriculum specialists, teachers, and administrators	1.86+.93	2.25+.78*
Evaluating existing nutrition education materials	1.80+.90	1.92+.89
Delivery of Educational Programs/Instructional Activities Area		
Using effective program delivery methods, based on needs of learners	2.00+.85	2.17+.68
Coordinating with teaching staff on nutrition education	1.88+.92	2.35+.74**
Developing workshops and training programs	1.76+.98	2.07+.83
Development of Partnerships/Strategic Alliances Area		
Promoting nutrition as an objective of schools	2.11+.89	2.38+.95
Developing effective strategic alliances at the school and community levels	1.88+.82	2.00+.88
Working with industry	1.80+.81	1.92+1.10
Taking a leadership role in the school district	1.52+.98	2.00+1.06*
Working with food service directors	1.35+.94	1.60+1.08

Table 6 cont....



Table 6 cont.

Topics for Continuing Education	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Community Outreach/Marketing Area		
Developing marketing efforts related to nutrition education	2.42+.71	2.20+.82
Developing marketing plans	2.34+.80	2.20+.88
Using social marketing techniques	2.31+.79	2.21+.83
Working with media representatives	2.18+.77	2.22+.92
Implementing community outreach activities	2.06+.79	2.27+.75
Working with community leaders	1.97+.79	2.07+.80
Program Evaluation Area		
Conducting environmental scan to determine trends	2.27+.84	2.20+.91
Conducting formative and summative evaluation	2.27+.86	2.15+.89
Planning evaluation strategies	2.20+.88	2.07+.86
Fiscal Management Area		
Combining nutrition integrity with sound fiscal management	1.91+.98	2.05+1.02
Preparing and monitoring budgets	1.57+.98	1.74+1.04
Knowing program regulations	1.42+.93	1.82+1.05

Table 6 cont...



Table 6 cont.

Topics for Continuing Education	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Program Management Area		
Using computers for teaching nutrition	2.11+.95	2.00+.89
Using computers for program management	1.97+1.02	1.95+.93
Writing grants	1.92+.83	2.03+.87
Developing requests for proposals	1.89+.87	2.05+.83
Managing the contract process	1.82+.97	1.95+.83
Other Area		
Use of new technology for education (i.e., CD-ROM, interactive video)	2.55+.71	2.40+.71
New resources for nutrition education	2.44+.59	2.47+.72
Update on nutrition education research	2.30+.66	2.20+.85
Trends in nutrition and food service	2.29+.67	2.17+.98
Comprehensive school health	2.27+.73	2.32+.69
Public policy formation, including forming coalitions to impact decisions	2.26+.71	2.13+.88
Research in nutrition and health	2.24+.70	1.92+.94
Current nutrition policy	2.20+.73	2.05+.90
Cultural diversity, including food patterns	2.15+.66	2.10+.98
Trends in health	2.14+.65	2.22+.89

Table 6 cont...

Table 6 cont.

Topics for Continuing Education	Level of Employment	
	State <sup>b</sup>	District <sup>c</sup>
	< ----- Mean+SD ----- >	
Other Area, cont.		
Trends in education	2.14+.70	2.17+.81
Roles of other agencies/programs with nutrition component	2.09+.74	2.05+.75
Networking and consensus building	2.06+.82	1.97+.95
Principles of quality management	2.03+.82	2.00+1.01
Population/demographic trends	1.97+.76	2.00+.88
Communication techniques	1.97+.88	1.88+1.02
Critical thinking skills	1.95+.83	2.00+1.01
Educational reform	1.94+.78	2.07+.94
Customer service	1.88+.77	1.95+1.08
Leadership	1.88+.83	1.85+1.10
Culinary skills to improve food appeal to students	1.82+.89	2.22+.89*
Decision making	1.76+.88	1.80+1.04
Public speaking	1.74+.90	1.85+.98
Ethics	1.39+.94	1.63+1.13

\*Significant at  $p < .05$ \*\*Highly significant at  $p < .01$ 

\*Scale: no need (0) to high need (3)

<sup>b</sup>N=66<sup>c</sup>N=40

students in program planning; working with curriculum specialists, teacher, and administrators; taking a leadership role in the school district, and culinary skills to improve food appeal to students.

## CONCLUSIONS

The need for continuing education as perceived by nutrition education personnel employed at the national USDA, regional USDA, state, and school district levels was determined. Most of the ten content areas received overall mean ratings indicating a moderate need for continuing education. Program evaluation was the content area ranked by all respondents with the highest need for continuing education. Nutrition education personnel appeared to be cognizant of the vital need to establish program effectiveness especially when utilizing federal funds. Increasing knowledge and skills in conducting impact assessments and cost-effectiveness analyses would be appropriate for continuing education in program evaluation. Other areas with high rankings for continuing education need were delivery of educational programs/instructional activities and needs assessment. Both of these areas have been given high priority in the NET strategic plan.

The area of fiscal management ranked the lowest in continuing education need. Research on the roles and responsibilities of NET personnel (Conklin, 1995) indicated that fiscal management was rated as the most important job function at the state level and the second or third most important function at the other levels of employment. The low rating for continuing education in fiscal management either indicates that the professionals are well-educated and confident in this area of employment or that the need for continuing education is not recognized.

Administrators can use this information in planning continuing professional education for nutrition education personnel. Content areas rated as moderate-to-high need for continuing education should be the focus of seminars and workshops. Specific topics such as the use of new technology in delivering educational programs also should be included in continuing professional education for NET personnel.





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Mandell, R. J. (ed). (1993, March). *The strategic plan for nutrition education*. Alexandria, VA: Nutrition and Technical Services Division, Food and Nutrition Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture.



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**APPENDIX A**

**NET ADVISORY COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS**

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## NET ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

APRIL 28-29, 1994 and  
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**APPENDIX B**

**STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE**

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**ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND CONTINUING  
EDUCATION NEEDS OF PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN  
NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE EDUCATION IN  
CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**



Please return questionnaire to:

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## PART I. CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS FOR PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN NUTRITION EDUCATION

**Instructions:** Please read the following topics/areas related to the job of an individual involved in nutrition and food service education in Child Nutrition Programs. Indicate whether you need to know more about the topic to be able to effectively perform your job. Circle your answer to indicate your need for continuing education for each topic listed using the following scale: **no need**, **low need**, **moderate need**, and **high need**.

	<u>Continuing Education Needs</u>			
	<b>no need</b>	<b>low need</b>	<b>moderate need</b>	<b>high need</b>
<b>Needs Assessment</b>				
Developing questionnaires for needs assessment	0	1	2	3
Collecting data for needs assessment	0	1	2	3
Conducting focus groups	0	1	2	3
Analyzing and summarizing needs assessment data	0	1	2	3
<b>Program Planning</b>				
Writing a philosophy statement	0	1	2	3
Involving students in program planning	0	1	2	3
Developing goals, objectives, and learner outcomes	0	1	2	3
Developing annual plans	0	1	2	3
Developing strategic plans	0	1	2	3
<b>Curricula/Program Development</b>				
Using effective methods for behavior change	0	1	2	3
Developing curricula	0	1	2	3
Using standards for sequential curricula	0	1	2	3
Evaluating existing nutrition education materials	0	1	2	3
Working with curriculum specialists, teachers, and administrators	0	1	2	3
Developing curricula based on age and developmental levels of students	0	1	2	3
Integrating nutrition into other curricula	0	1	2	3
Developing training programs based on adult learning techniques	0	1	2	3
<b>Delivery of Educational Programs/Instructional Activities</b>				
Using effective program delivery methods, based on needs of learners	0	1	2	3
Developing workshops and training programs	0	1	2	3
Coordinating with teaching staff on nutrition education	0	1	2	3

**Continuing Education Needs**

	<b>no need</b>	<b>low need</b>	<b>moderate need</b>	<b>high need</b>
<b>Development of Partnerships/Strategic Alliances</b>				
Developing effective strategic alliances at the school and community levels	0	1	2	3
Working with food service directors	0	1	2	3
Taking a leadership role in the school district	0	1	2	3
Promoting nutrition as an objective of schools	0	1	2	3
Working with industry	0	1	2	3
<b>Community Outreach/Marketing</b>				
Developing marketing efforts related to nutrition education	0	1	2	3
Developing marketing plans	0	1	2	3
Implementing community outreach activities	0	1	2	3
Working with media representatives	0	1	2	3
Using social marketing techniques	0	1	2	3
Working with community leaders	0	1	2	3
<b>Program Evaluation</b>				
Planning evaluation strategies	0	1	2	3
Conducting formative and summative evaluation	0	1	2	3
Conducting environmental scan to determine trends	0	1	2	3
<b>Fiscal Management</b>				
Preparing and monitoring budgets	0	1	2	3
Knowing program regulations	0	1	2	3
Combining nutrition integrity with sound fiscal management	0	1	2	3
<b>Program Management</b>				
Writing grants	0	1	2	3
Developing requests for proposals	0	1	2	3
Managing the contract process	0	1	2	3
Using computers for program management	0	1	2	3
Using computers for teaching nutrition	0	1	2	3

**Continuing Education Needs**

	<b>no need</b>	<b>low need</b>	<b>moderate need</b>	<b>high need</b>
<b>Other</b>				
Leadership	0	1	2	3
Critical thinking skills	0	1	2	3
Population/demographic trends	0	1	2	3
Cultural diversity, including food patterns	0	1	2	3
Trends in education	0	1	2	3
Educational reform	0	1	2	3
Trends in health	0	1	2	3
Comprehensive school health	0	1	2	3
Research in nutrition and health	0	1	2	3
Current nutrition policy	0	1	2	3
Trends in nutrition and food service	0	1	2	3
Update on nutrition education research	0	1	2	3
Use of new technology for education (ie. CD-ROM, interactive video)	0	1	2	3
New resources for nutrition education	0	1	2	3
Public policy formation, including forming coalitions to impact decisions	0	1	2	3
Roles of other agencies/programs with nutrition component	0	1	2	3
Customer service	0	1	2	3
Principles of quality management	0	1	2	3
Culinary skills to improve food appeal to students	0	1	2	3
Public speaking	0	1	2	3
Decision making	0	1	2	3
Communication techniques	0	1	2	3
Networking and consensus building	0	1	2	3
Ethics	0	1	2	3
<b>Other areas where you need continuing education</b>				

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## PART II. PERSONAL AND PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

**Instructions:** Please answer the following questions about yourself and the program in which you are employed to assist us in analyzing the results of this study. Please circle the answer that is appropriate.

1. At which level are you employed?

- 1 National USDA
- 2 Regional USDA
- 3 State
- 4 Regional (within a state)
- 5 School District

If employed at the district level, what is the enrollment in your district? \_\_\_\_\_

2. If employed at the state, region within a state, or school district level, in which state do you work?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your current position title? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the title of your immediate supervisor? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you employed part-time or full-time?

- 1 Part-time, specify number of hours per week \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Full-time

6. What percent of your time is devoted strictly to nutrition and food service education responsibilities?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you supervise any employees?

- 1 NO
- 2 YES

If YES, what are their titles? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is your highest level of education?

- 1 baccalaureate degree, major \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 some graduate credits, area \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 master's degree, major \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 doctoral degree, major \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 other, please specify type and area \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your certification status? (circle all that apply)
- 1 NOT certified
  - 2 State Department of Education certified
  - 3 ASFSA certified, please specify level \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4 Registered Dietitian
  - 5 Licensed Dietitian/Nutritionist
  - 6 State CNP certified
  - 7 Certified Home Economist
  - 8 Teacher certification
  - 9 Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
10. How many years have you been employed in a job with nutrition and food service education responsibilities?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How many years of work experience do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Please describe any previous experiences that you have found useful in your current position.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. How many years of work experience do you believe is necessary to be successful in your current position?  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. List college courses that you have found to be useful preparation for your current position.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. List college courses that you **did not take** that you think would be useful preparation for your current position.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What is the source of funding for your position?
- 1 NET Program
  - 2 State Administrative Expense (SAE)
  - 3 Child Nutrition Program
  - 4 Instruction
  - 5 Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE  
WITH THIS PROJECT**